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Livestock Disease Outlook -- 1958

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cides. This control, however, is only 50 percent effective. If everyone practiced the best known methods of control, we could increase the effective control to about 75 percent. To prevent the remaining 25-percent loss will require new methods, new chemicals, new equipment, new crop varieties and better cultural practices.

Weather Important . . .

Plant diseases are greatly influenced by the weather. How severe plant diseases will be in 1958 depends largely on the amount and frequency of rainfall this coming spring and summer. In cool, wet years diseases are generally much more important than in warm, dry seasons—though considerable loss occurs every year.

Certain inconspicuous or "hidden" diseases appear every year. Unless a loss from these diseases is striking, such things as the weather, poor seed, condition of seedbed, depth and time of planting, poor fertility, etc., usually get blamed—when, actually, disease is the real culprit.

From careful study of records and field observations, plant pathologists can predict future outbreaks of disease with some degree of accuracy. Long-range weather forecasting, 30 days in advance, is helping in this respect. The table gives some idea of the prospects for 1958—depending on the weather—for outbreaks of our most common Iowa plant diseases.

What You Can Do . . .

Though exact predictions of disease outbreaks are impossible, you can keep your losses at a minimum, regardless of weather, by doing as many of the following as practical:

1. Plant only highest quality seed or plant stock of recommended varieties. Use certified or disease-free seed whenever possible.

2. Use disease-resistant varieties where available and adapted to Iowa. Use more than one variety.

3. Clean and chemically treat seed of cereals, grasses, vegetables and flowers.

4. Plant crops at recommended times in a well-prepared seedbed. Carry out recommended cultural practices.

5. Practice a sound crop rotation and sanitation program. Remove and burn crop debris in the fall or plow it under deeply and cleanly.

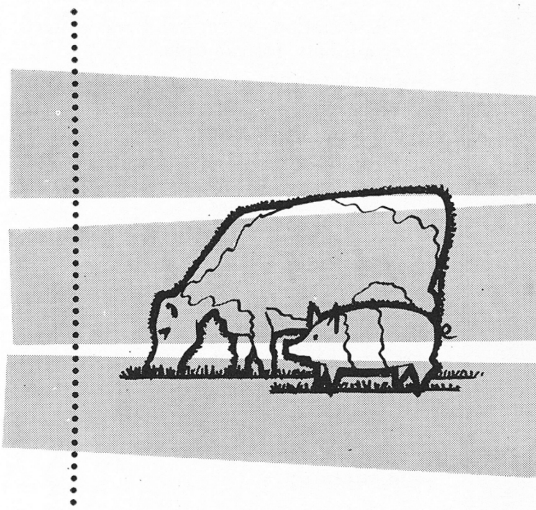
6. Avoid excessive mechanical injury when cultivating, harvesting, storing, etc.

7. Use *protective* fungicide sprays or dusts (preferably applied just before wet periods) on fruits, vegetables and ornamentals which have had foliage and fruit diseases in the past. Apply materials correctly—often enough, at the right time and thoroughly.

8. Keep down weeds and insects which may harbor disease-producing organisms.

Livestock Disease Situation -- 1958

With the changes taking place in agriculture today, livestock disease control is becoming more important—both because of narrowed margins and from the standpoint of quality improvement.



by John B. Herrick

IOWA had no major outbreaks of livestock diseases in 1957. Much of this good fortune is due to the work of the regulatory and practicing veterinarians. These people—who maintain the quarantines, health regulations and interstate restrictions on the movement of livestock—help make Iowa one of the safest places in the world for raising livestock.

And Iowa has more veterinarians in practice than ever before. There isn't a farm in the state that doesn't have easily obtainable veterinary service.

Also, during 1957 the Iowa legislature passed two new brucellosis laws which will aid us in becoming an accredited state.

But the toll from livestock diseases is still great. Swine erysipelas, parasites, shipping fever, mastitis, poultry diseases, leptospirosis and several other common diseases are prevalent. Lack of

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sound management coupled with failure to use available veterinary service is responsible for much of the loss from these diseases.

Misleading advice is still accepted by many livestock men. Overpowering advertisements and high pressure sales by "modern medicine men" are plentiful—with more interest in the livestock man's money than in the health of his livestock.

Keeping accurate records on livestock losses would be a great aid in reducing disease losses in the state. Records should be kept not only of mortality losses—that is, actual death loss of animals—but also of morbidity losses. These morbidity losses include:

—Reduced yield and depreciation of animal products—eggs, hide, wool, casings and the cost of medicinal preparations.
—Condemnation of parts and carcasses at slaughter.
—Waste of feed, labor and space.
—Interference with breeding and reproduction, reduced litter size, abortions, etc.
—Reduced quality of animals, lower grades of animals and reduced sale values.
—Lower efficiency of work animals.
—Depreciation of capital items—breeder animals, for example.
—Inefficient use of pastures.
—Lowered resistance of diseased animals to other diseases.
—Diseases of animals transmissible to man resulting in death, suffering, man-hours lost, etc.
—Expenditures for worthless or inefficient drugs.

The modern livestock producer must keep these points in mind when thinking of disease control. If every livestock producer kept accurate records of these losses, the incidence of disease would lessen considerably.

Problems for 1958

● Increased attention will be given to brucellosis control. Restrictions on the movement of cattle has prompted more blood testing than ever before. In the next year, several Iowa counties will circulate petitions to clean up brucellosis in the entire county. This is for your safety.

● More emphasis will be placed on mastitis control because of the problem of antibiotics in milk obtained and sold from treated quarters. This is the dairymen's responsibility and should be handled by them before restrictions and adverse publicity develop. The Pure Food and Drug Administration—the agency that safeguards our food industry—has found increasing amounts of antibiotics in milk. Recommendations have been set forth to prevent this adulteration practice. These should be strictly followed. They are not penalties but are to protect the dairy industry.

● A second look should be given to the cost and the value of medicated feeds. This is true not only for the poultry industry but also for livestock enterprises. Sound management practices and veterinary medicine used to prevent disease outbreaks are cheaper and sounder practices in the long run.

● Leptospirosis is widespread and is one of the major diseases in cattle and swine. Vaccination is increasing in popularity as a preventative.

● Systemic grubacides — products that can be fed or sprayed on cattle to kill grubs in the animal's tissues—are being thoroughly investigated and look promising. Limited amounts of at least one form will be available in 1958.

● Tranquilizers for nervous animals have been used for the unruly heifer and cow, the nervous bull and sometimes on feedlot cattle. A word of caution: These drugs act differently on different animals. They have side effects and should not be used indiscriminately.

● It's extremely important to follow recommendations for the proper use of external pesticides on livestock. Many of the products formerly used are no longer recommended because they adulterate meat and milk. These recommendations should be closely followed for your own protection and the protection of the consumer.

● Bloat is one of our continuing problems. A "sure" bloat preventative has not been found. Continued research may unveil one in the near future.

● Iowa still needs an animal disease reporting system and stricter regulations on the movement of diseased animals.

● The perennial problem of livestock owners buying "easy cures" or "sure disease preventatives" and other such products where research has revealed and recommended different approaches will still exist in Iowa during 1958. Education holds the answer to this problem.

New Trends . . .

No disease was ever eradicated without legislation and education. Tick fever, glanders, foot and mouth, tuberculosis and other diseases were eradicated in the United States by the use of these two methods. Brucellosis eradication is underway now, and programs for controlling other diseases are being set up. National committees are studying ways and means of eradicating hog cholera. As time passes, other diseases will be handled similarly. These movements are for your protection. It's sound business to spend $5 once to eradicate a disease rather than to spend $1 every year to merely control it.

Quality and efficiency are the key words in livestock production in our changing agriculture. Quality meat, eggs and milk can be produced only from healthy animals. In gearing livestock production, the producer of today must realize that quality will help keep the consuming public after his product. Thus, sanitary surroundings and balanced rations, coupled with sound disease control programs, will keep the Iowa producer on a sound footing.

Outlook "Bright" . . .

In general, the disease control outlook for 1958 is on the bright side. The livestock industry has at its disposal ample veterinary service, consultation facilities and incentive to control livestock diseases. But Iowa still suffers its share of the 1,882-million-dollar annual loss estimated for the United States. To cut down this loss, we need to continue to follow sound disease control practices on all farms.